

Police defend use of tear gas in webvideo
MalaysiaKini.com
May 07, 2012

Rejecting allegations that the tear gas used during the Bersih 3.0 rally on April 28 is hazardous to human health, the police have uploaded video clips on their Internet homepage to justify their action.

The use of such a riot control agent, they claimed in two video clips on their official Facebook page yesterday, is safe and complies with international standards.

The first video contains an explanation from their Logistics Department (Weaponry) assistant chief director Syed Mustafa Raja Syed Nordin on the different types of eye irritants.

The video shows four types of eye irritants - a tear gas grenade, a tear gas canister, liquid eye irritants and pepper spray.

Syed Mustafa says all four irritants are imported from the US, Canada and Switzerland and comply with international standards set by the UN and come with relevant certificates.

Tear gas grenades and tear gas canisters, he explained, contain CS gas which is considered by UN as a riot control agent and is generally recognised by most countries as non-lethal.

Syed Mustafa said CS is the abbreviation for the names of the two inventors of the gas, Ben Corson and Roger Stoughton, and not the company Combined System, which supplies tear gas to Israel, as some quarters claim.

'Not even a minor in injury from CS gas'

The irritants, he claimed, are used for riot prevention by many countries, including the US, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Australia, South Korea and Thailand.

He also rebutted the claim that CS gas is lethal because those in the Federal Reserve Unit and the police technical department have frequently been exposed to it during training and testing.

However, no injury, not even a minor one, has been reported from exposure to the gas, he said.

Syed Mustafa said the CS gas is also not banned under the Chemical Weapons Convention 1993, which he said Malaysia has ratified, and that the convention only bans the use of riot control agents during an open war, not for the prevention or dispersal of a riot.

In addition, the CS gas was also used by Malaysian police performing the UN's mission in East Timor.

The second video features two chief executive officers from two companies that supply CS gas and CS liquid - the chemical irritant used in water cannons - to the police force.

Both of them in the clip give their assurance that their products are safe and only cause temporary irritation.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/197174>